GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1097
ANSWERED ON:31.07.2000
SABARIMALA TEMPLE IN KERALA
SURESH KODIKUNNIL

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal from Kerala Government for the development of Sabarimala temple in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have sent any study group to visit Sabarimala and assess the land utilisation;

(d) if so, whether Kerala Government has put forth any alternative proposal for additional land; and

(e) if so, details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI)

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) The Government of Kerala had earlier in 1993 submitted a proposal for diversion of 115.60-hectare forest land under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for providing amenities to pilgrims of Sabarimala Temple. While this proposal was under process, the State Government in December 1995 forwarded another proposal involving 20 hectares of forest land for the same purpose. The State Government was requested to carry out a study so as to minimise any adverse environmental effect of the development activity in the area and to prepare a long term Master Plan as majority of the forest area formed part of Periyar Tiger Reserve. Despite repeated reminders, the State Government did not furnish all the required information. Meanwhile, the Ministry has approved diversion of 0.4225 hectare area on 26.11.98 for construction of sewage treatment plant at Cheriyanavottam as it was site-specific and for an eco-friendly use and 0.20 hectare for construction of a check-dam at Kunnar for water augmentation & allowed temporary use of 5.00 hectare at Pamba for parking facilities on 2.2.2000.

(c) Yes Sir. A Committee lead by Sh. O. Rajagopal, Hon`ble Minister of State for Law, Justice & Company Affairs alongwith Shri Ramesh Chennithala, M.P. has inspected the site on 26th & 27th March, 2000. The Committee has made detailed observations and suggested action on removal of unauthorised constructions & dumped garbage from Pamba, preparation of long term detailed master plan of the entire complex, action plan for pollution control of Pamba river, etc. The State Government has been requested on 8.6.2000 to initiate action on the above recommendations and formulate a proposal accordingly for fresh consideration of the Ministry. In view of this the already submitted proposal for balance area has been closed.

(d) No Sir.

(e) Does not arise.